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THE MILLENIUM--PREPARATION PROGRAMS FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNSELORS OF THE FUTURE.

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ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GUIDANCE PROGRAMS WILL EXIST IN THE FUTURE. THE CHANGING WORLD OF WORK WILL CAUSE CURRICULUM REVISIONS TO INCLUDE OCCUPATIONAL UNDERSTANDING WHICH WILL PERMIT MORE COUNSELING. THE COUNSELOR WILL AID CHILDREN IN DEVELOPING WORTHWHILE LEISURE PURSUITS AND AN AWARENESS OF A MULTIPLE-CAREER FUTURE. AS COUNSELING PROGRAMS GROW IN NUMBER, RESEARCH DIMENSIONS WILL IMPROVE ALONG WITH THE CONSULTING THAT GOES ON IN THE SCHOOL SETTING, AND FUNCTIONARIES WILL BE AVAILABLE TO RELEASE THE COUNSELOR FROM SECRETARIAL CHORES. THE COUNSELOR WILL BE A PROFESSIONAL AND WILL REQUIRE A 2-YEAR TRAINING PROGRAM. ELECTRONICALLY MONITORED OFF-CAMPUS PRACTICUM EXPERIENCES AND A PAID INTERNSHIP OF A 1/2-YEAR WILL OCCUR ALONG WITH EXTENSIVE SENSITIVITY TRAINING. A LIAISON WITH THE UNIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY WILL BE MAINTAINED FOR SERVICE AND RESEARCH PURPOSES. GROUP COUNSELING WILL BECOME VALUED CONCOMITANT WITH GROUP COUNSELING PRACTICUM EXPERIENCES. AS EXPERIENCE IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GUIDANCE INCREASES, COUNSELOR EDUCATION PROGRAMS WILL INCLUDE A COUNSELING TECHNIQUES COURSE RELATED TO THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILD. IMPROVEMENTS IN TECHNOLOGY WILL AID BOTH COUNSELOR EDUCATION AND THE COUNSELING EXPERIENCE. THIS PAPER WAS PRESENTED AT THE AMERICAN PERSONNEL AND GUIDANCE ASSOCIATION CONVENTION (DALLAS, MARCH 21, 1967). (VL)

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THE MILLENIUM:

Preparation Programs for Elementary School Counselors of the Future

Richard C. Nelson

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This topic is one I personally selected nearly a year ago as some of us discussed this program while we sat in a hotel room in Washington during the last convention. It sounded fresh, interesting, and worthy of consideration. I still feel it is fresh, interesting, and worthy of consideration, but I now begin to perceive how complicated the issue really is. We've all heard the poem noting that "For want of a nail, successively, a shoe, horse, rider, battle and war were lost." This illustrates how interdependent apparently unrelated and often unimportant events or items may be. It now seems apparent to me that a successful prediction of the future of counselor education at any level is dependent upon so many factors that it seems both foolhardy and wise to speculate -- foolhardy in that one could be so very totally wrong, and wise since change will come and some dialogue may help prepare the way for a smoother transition of a basically conservative profession so that it need not be "dragged kicking and screaming into the 21st century."

The problem of cloudy vision while looking into the crystal ball may be more apparent if some of the factors which would affect the situation were enumerated. Look at them as questions. Will we have a peaceful era

CG 000 240

ahead which might permit us to devote our energies to the pursuit of the good life, or will we all, this paper, and the entire field and future of guidance, even humanity, be wafted into the air on a radioactive cloud, or, as is perhaps more likely, will we pour energy, talents, money, and manpower into an unavoidable series of world "brush fire" wars? Will technology create the era in which education for leisure is one of the crucial functions of our future? That is, will we be at the point in time before too long when 15 to 20 per cent of our manpower produce all the consumer goods and services needed and when the 80 to 85 per cent are unemployed because of technical advances, or will our technologists create proportionately more and more new products and services, and our advertisers induce us to "need" more and more things? Will the structure and function of today's school buildings be retained, or will the child of tomorrow sit in the comfort of his home before two way communication devices from which he can select a given intellectual activity by feeding a key which unlocks the next step, for example, in his mathematics curriculum (covering set theory through differential calculus in an integrated programmed sequence designed to be completed by the average child in from three to seven years beginning any time after his knowledge of reading mathematics has been developed and tested before his teacher-examiner)? Will the psychological-chemical breakthrough still be a futuristic dream to some, a nightmare to others, or will specific chemical treatments, accurate beyond our wildest imaginings, help children and others to maintain optimum functioning even under highly adverse circumstances?

One could continue for some time enumerating the effects of possible changes in our present living which might drastically alter the structure of the school and social order and therefore the counselor's function.

ASSUMPTIONS

It seems necessary therefore to posit certain assumptions upon which predictions will be based. These assumptions are:

1. An uneasy peace will prevail.

2. The general economy of our nation will continue in its gradual healthy upward spiral, meeting deviations of varying magnitude, but moving onward and upward.

3. Technology will not radically alter the present situation in which children present themselves to a classroom to work directly with a teacher at least part of the time.

4. The focus of most of our young people will continue to be that of fitting themselves for gainful employment, which, though it might be directed in a greater proportion toward such emphases as services and recreation — related employment, will conform in many ways to the existing social structure. That is, we won't be at the millenium or the awful state, depending on the point of view, expressed in the song "Oh Happy Day" from the musical Li'l Abner.

> No need to fret,
> Get in a jet,
> And off to work you spin,
> Or better yet
> Stay home and let
> Wifey phone you in.

We will assume that work won't change that much between now and the year 2000 for the greater number of us.

Taking the above assumptions for granted, then, let us turn our attention to characteristic differences in the counseling program and the implications they make for elementary school counselor preparation.

FUTURE COUNSELING PROGRAMS:

DIFFERENCES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS

Probably the most obvious and significant difference from today which might be expected to occur in future elementary guidance programs and therefore in counselor preparation will be that programs will exist. That is, elementary schools will have counselors. Implications of the existence

of functioning elementary counseling programs will be many and varied.

First, there will be opportunity for expansion and refinement of the kind of combined field-practice and practicum contact which is characteristic of many institute and other counselor education programs today. Many such programs exist in which the counselor-in-training works in a school setting and also works on campus "under glass" with both direct and indirect supervision. It is not beyond the realm of possibility that the counselor in the school setting will conduct a closed circuit TV interview which is beamed to the supervisors office and have immediate feedback and interaction with the supervisor, in which some of his tape will be replayed for discussion, following the session.

Second, as a result of existing guidance programs, an internship will be feasible wherein a practicing counselor will work under the direct supervision of a professional in the field. Electronic advances such as those suggested above will provide the counselor educator with means to observe and react to the supervisory contact in the school setting as well as the counseling contact.

Third, the consulting relationship, as a result of experience over time, will be better defined than at present. The existence of counselors in schools will provide counselors and counselor educators with more experience with, and understanding of, effective consulting, and , again facilitated by electronic advances, this kind of contact will be researched and refined.

Fourth, as counseling programs grow in numbers, the counseling office, as the classroom,will become less of an island unto itself. As a result of (a) the increasing numbers of schools having more than one counselor, (b) the

acknowledged need for more interaction and mutual assistance among counselors, (c) the recognized advantage of supervision of the counselor in action, and (d) the development of university sponsored internship programs, there will be increasing numbers of schools creating observable counseling facilities. This will increase and improve the research dimensions which will, in turn, improve the counseling and consulting which goes on in the school setting.

The changing world of work will have its effects upon the character of elementary counselor preparation. The work of Senesch of Purdue in economic education for elementary school age children and the acknowledgment of the need for reasoned understandings and reasonable attitudes toward the world of work on the part of children will lead to curriculum revisions so that economic and occupational understandings will be given adequate consideration. Thus the change here might well be one which results in the elementary school counselor becoming less involved in the curricular phase of developing occupational understandings and perhaps a bit more involved in the counseling phase. Children may be expected to develop additional sensitivities as a result of these curricular explorations and may well wish to develop more self understanding on this topic.

A second reaction to the changing world of work will relate to the changing work and leisure balance. Dr. Anna Meeks tells of a conference conducted around 1960 in the Baltimore, Maryland area in which retired people concluded that the elementary school period was vital to the development of their leisure time pursuits. To say it another way, we do much to develop our lifetime pattern for using our leisure time during our elementary school days. The shorter work week makes it seem rather vital that all members of the educational staff, not least of all the counselor,

give attention to this important area of concern. There may be many opportunities for the school counselor to aid children in seeing the difference, and the necessary balance, between vocational and avocational pursuits. There will be need also for children to be aided in their awareness of the multiple career future which is expected for many members of succeeding generations.

A final difference in counseling programs themselves will be that more school functionaries will be available. Aides to the classroom teacher, the school administrator, and the school counselor, will release all of the professionals for more truly professional activities. Record keeping, test work, distributing materials, etc. will cease to involve much of the counselor's time, if indeed it ever did at the elementary school level.

PREPARATION PROGRAMS OF THE FUTURE

If the previous discussion relating to the future in general and the future counseling program in particular has any merit, and if present trends continue, we will see preparation programs change in the following ways:

1. The counselor who is released from clerical tasks will be a professional. As such he will require more than the fifth year technical education he now receives. The balance which now occurs in which the fifth year is devoted to guidance - related courses and the sixth year to general education will be reversed. The counselor will receive a foundational training in sociology, anthropology, economics, political science, and, of course, psychology and child development, and will gradually expand his contact with professional courses in guidance and counseling.

2. A two year preparation program of the character described above will be expected of counselors before they enter the field.
3. Support of a financial nature, especially from government sources, will make the evening class school counselor trainee a minority in counselor training. The developing appreciation of the value of human resources will result in vastly extended financial support for both counselor preparation and counseling programs.
4. A paid internship of at least a half year will be a standard portion of the counselor education of the counselor-in-training.
5. Prior to the internship combined on and off campus practicum experiences or electronically monitored off campus practicum experiences will occur.
6. The result of our halting attempts through process groups and our experiments in sensitivity training will bear fruit and we will have a philosophically well-grounded intense experience as a part of most counselor education programs. In some way or other those who plan to counsel will experience intensive self-examination and will have received appraisals from others which are designed to help them become more effective individuals and counselors. The field of counselor education will be enhanced greatly if and when such experiences can be designed to aid in the self selection and selective retention process.
7. Counselor education will not end with the sixth year or the internship. In service liaison between the school counselor

and the university will be maintained on a university service basis.

8. Free flowing research in counseling will be maintained through the liaison described above. Research into counseling, thus, will take on more importance in the counselor preparation program.

9. The consulting role of the school counselor in his interaction particularly with teachers and parents will be given specific and direct consideration as the field focuses more adequately on this vital endeavor.

10. Group counseling and guidance will become especially valued at the elementary school level. Efforts will be made to include teachers, parents, children, and others in various combinations in school counseling groups, but the focus will remain on counselor-led groups of children and counselor education will reflect this change by creating group counseling practicum experiences.

11. The referral and liaison processes will command additional attention in the counselor education program as services expand in the community and through the school system.

12. Occupational knowledge will be expected of the counselor at all grade levels, but elementary school curricula will give much more attention to this area than at present; thus the counselor will operate more as a resource person to teachers and an individual counselor to children in this area.

13. The emphasis of the counselor education program will shift

from articulation toward other levels — getting kids ready for junior high school — toward a recognition of the foundational character of elementary school guidance. Concern will be focused on helping the child to live in the world he faces today as the best preparation for facing the world tomorrow.

14. As the professionals in elementary school guidance develop literature related especially to child counseling it will become general practice for counselor education programs to include a counseling techniques course related especially to the elementary school child. This course, while overlapping much with the standard counseling course, will consider the literature developing especially around child counseling including the use of materials in facilitating child communication and expression.

15. The field of elementary school guidance will enter the space age through the extended use of videotaping, through closed-circuit television monitoring of counseling interviews in the school setting, through computerized data recording and storage for research purposes, and through storage banks which can provide instant information retrieval to answer many of the questions posed by both the child and the counselor.

16. Through the monitoring devices available, it would be feasible for the practices of an elementary school counselor to be audited as carefully as the bank might audit its accounts. The counselor could be aided by experts to achieve near

maximum effectiveness since his "accounts" with children could be supervised carefully and assistance could be given him.

The future of elementary school guidance is indeed bright. The counselor will achieve a higher level of professionalization. Society will give more attention and support to all phases of education. Counselor education programs will respond with a double thrust of more adequate general preparation and more meaningful professional preparation. We will look upon 1967 as a rather embryonic stage in the development of elementary counselor education. Yet the main attribute of the counselor beyond more highly developed and refined skills will remain his personality. A greater success ratio will greet the efforts of the counselor of the year 2000 as a result of the reduction of the encapsulation and isolation of the counselor of today, as a result of research efforts which point us in ever more appropriate directions in working with children and adults, and as a result of the technology which can assist us in accomplishing our chosen task.